

CITY OF SAN JOSÉ, CALIFORNIA  
 Department of Planning, Building and Code Enforcement  
 801 North First Street, Room 400  
 San José, California 95110-1795

Hearing Date/Agenda Number  
 H.L.C. 5/07/03 Item 4.b.

File Number  
 HL03-47

Application Type  
 Historic Landmark Designation

Council District SNI  
 3  
 Market/Almaden

Planning Area  
 Central

Assessor's Parcel Number(s)  
 264-32-031

## STAFF REPORT

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Completed by: Sally Notthoff Zarnowitz

Location: 128 Pierce Avenue

Gross Acreage: 0.18 Net Acreage: 0.18 Net Density: n/a

Existing Zoning: R-1-8 Residential Existing Use: Single Family Residential

Proposed Zoning: No change Proposed Use: No Change

### GENERAL PLAN

Completed by: SNZ

Land Use/Transportation Diagram Designation  
 Medium Low Density Residential (8 DU/AC)

Project Conformance:  
☒ Yes ☐ No  
☐ See Analysis and Recommendations

### SURROUNDING LAND USES AND ZONING

Completed by: SNZ

North: Residential R-M Multiple Residence District

East: Residential R-1-8 Residence District

South: Residential R-1-8 Residence District

West Residential R-1-8 Residence District

### ENVIRONMENTAL STATUS

Completed by: SNZ

☐ Environmental Impact Report found complete  
☐ Negative Declaration circulated on  
☐ Negative Declaration adopted on

☒ Exempt  
☐ Environmental Review Incomplete

### FILE HISTORY

Completed by: SNZ

Annexation Title: Original City

Date: 3/27/1850

### PLANNING DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION

☒ Recommend Approval  
☐ Recommend Approval with Conditions  
☐ Recommend Denial

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_

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**OWNER**

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Steven and Margaret Carlson  
128 Pierce Avenue  
San Jose CA 95110

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**PUBLIC AGENCY COMMENTS RECEIVED**

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Completed by: SNZ

Department of Public Works

None

Other Departments and Agencies

See attached SNI Memo

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**GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE**

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See attached Department of Parks and Recreation Form

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**ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

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**BACKGROUND**

The Rank House is located at 128 Pierce Avenue in the R-1-8 Residential zoning district and designated Medium Low Density Residential (8 DU/AC) on the adopted San Jose 2020 General Plan Land Use Transportation Diagram. The Historic Landmarks Commission will forward a recommendation on the designation to the City Council for consideration at a public hearing on June 3, 2003 at 1:30 p.m.

**HISTORIC RESOURCE DESCRIPTION**

The house at 128 Pierce Street was built in approximately 1888-1889. The first owner, and likely builder was Theodore Rank, a surveyor and civil engineer who was also San Jose's Assistant City Engineer for a period of time in the nineteenth century.

The one story Stick Style Victorian residence has a simple front-gabled roof and is detailed with both Stick and Eastlake ornamentation. A square bay window at the front contains double-hung windows that are set within casings that overlap at the top in a cross-board pattern. The flat frieze boards continue across the façade and frame the spindle work above the porch. The front gable end is flush with the plane of the bay window and is clad with fish scale shingles. The roof is supported at the porch with a single turned column and at the side with spindle fan brackets. The building is clad with rustic redwood channel drop siding that rises from grade to a plain, boxed cornice. Much of the original interior material of this well-maintained residence remains intact, including plaster and floors. The living room has original corbels at the bay window alcove, and the dining room exhibits an original fireplace surround and buffet. It is a unique representation of the Victorian style of architecture in San Jose, and is visually distinctive in its setting on Pierce Avenue with other residential structures of similar vintage.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

Under the provisions of Section 15307 of the State Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), this project is found to be exempt from environmental review in that the project is limited to an action taken by a regulatory agency as authorized by state law or local ordinance to assure the maintenance, restoration, or enhancement of a natural resource where the regulatory process involves procedures for protection of the environment.

## **GENERAL PLAN CONFORMANCE**

The Landmark Designation for this single family residence on a 0.18 gross-acre site (5.6 DU/AC) conforms with the San Jose 2020 General Plan Land Use/Transportation Diagram designation of Medium Low Density Residential (8 Dwelling Units/Acre). The densities set forth for the single-family residential categories represent the maximum allowable density. No minimum density is intended to apply to these categories. Lower densities may be allowed, especially if to do so would preserve the historic and architectural qualities, and the use would not otherwise be incompatible with the surrounding area.

## **ANALYSIS**

Landmark designation is proposed for the Rank House, located at 128 Pierce Avenue on the approximately 0.18 gross acre site. The proposal is consistent with General Plan historic, archeological and cultural resources goals and policies, which state the preservation of historically or archeologically significant sites, structures and districts is a key consideration in the development review process. These policies also state that “the city should use the landmark designation process of the Historic Preservation Ordinance to promote the preservation of historically or architecturally significant sites and structures.”

The Rank House merits designation as a historic landmark based on its historical, cultural and architectural significance (see attached State form and Historic Evaluation Form). The building qualifies for landmark status based on the following criteria of the Historic Preservation Ordinance (Municipal Code Section 13.48.110):

6. Its embodiment of distinguishing characteristics of the Victorian era architectural type or specimen; and
8. Its embodiment of elements of architectural design in its ornate detailing and compositions that represent a significant innovation during the 1880s within the larger body of vernacular architecture in the region.

## **COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

The property owner has requested the nomination. A public hearing notice for the project was published in a local newspaper, posted at the site and mailed to all property owners and tenants within 500 feet of the subject site.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Planning staff recommends that the Commission, after holding a public hearing on the subject proposal, recommend that the City Council approve the designation of The Rank House, 128 Pierce Avenue as Historic Landmark No. HL03-147.

PBCE002/Historic/HL Nominations/HL03-147 HLC SR